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FIRE SAFETY



A Family Affair



Ministry of
the Solicitor
General

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INTRODUCTION

There is no denying the magic of fire, but when it is racing towards you and devouring everything in its path, there is nothing beautiful or mystical about it. Fire travels fast, faster than one might imagine, and it is totally destructive. Nothing is spared. Nothing.

Dramatic – you bet! Hollywood couldn't conceive, let alone manufacture, a more ruthless monster. Yet, fire prevention is not taken very seriously despite the fact that there are approximately 800 fire deaths in Canada each year. Most fatal fires start at night, in the home, during the wee hours when everyone is sound asleep. Worse, most fire victims are children and senior citizens. There is such a thing as an honest-to-goodness accident (lightning does strike) but the majority of fires and fire deaths are caused by carelessness and ignorance.

Cigarettes, faulty wiring, kitchen fires, to name a few, have caused fires since homes were huts. While the causes are old, there is something new on the scene that may not prevent a fire but will prevent a death – the smoke alarm. Read about them and invest in several.

"Don't play with matches" – a rule most children are raised with. Since the rule is repeated often, many parents assume a child will obey. In most cases of juvenile arson, parents are astonished to discover that their child has set a fire. It is a frightening fact that children who play with fire and do not experience the consequences, may repeat the act over and over until they have grown past the fascination or have caused serious damage to themselves and others.

How to buy and where to put wood stoves and barbecues, how to get out of a hotel fire, buying and mounting smoke alarms – all of these topics, plus dozens more, are discussed in this book. And while this book may be little, its hopes are big – to save your life and the lives of your family. Do you believe that you know about fire safety? Take the quiz on the next page and find out.

FIRE SAFETY QUIZ (answers on the last page)

1. What is the only book a child should not open?
2. If you sprayed a Class D fire with a Class A extinguisher, what would happen?
3. What type of burn is the most severe, first or third?
4. Generally speaking, which degree of burn is initially more painful?
5. What type of fire extinguisher is most suitable for the average home?
6. What percentage of adult fire victims are impaired?
7. A popular material for children's clothes, and summer clothes, cannot be made flame retardant. What is it?
8. Which will harm the flame retardant chemicals in clothes, soap or detergent?
9. What has a head and no brains?
10. Smoke contains nitric oxide which turns into nitric acid when it mixes with what?
11. Name the major cause of fatal home fires.
12. What is creosote and how can it cause trouble in your home?
13. It has been called the greatest advancement in fire protection since the bucket. What is it?
14. Name three places in the home where you should NOT put a smoke alarm.
15. In a house fire, the rule is GET OUT AND STAY OUT. In a highrise, there are two choices. What are they?
16. Only a few children are fascinated by fire. True or False.
17. What percentage of arson fires are set by juvenile offenders?
18. Describe a smoke tent.
19. Name the most common type of household burn that requires hospital treatment.
20. It is recommended that emergency telephone numbers be listed by the telephone. What all important address is commonly left off this list?
21. Assuming all the electrical connections are fine, how can a clothes dryer start on fire?
22. If a pot of oil on the stove bursts into flames, what should you do?
23. What can you do to protect yourself against arson?
24. In an apartment or hotel fire, what is likely to disappear? (Hint – it's in the hall and meant to help you escape.)
25. What do the following initials/symbols stand for?

CSA

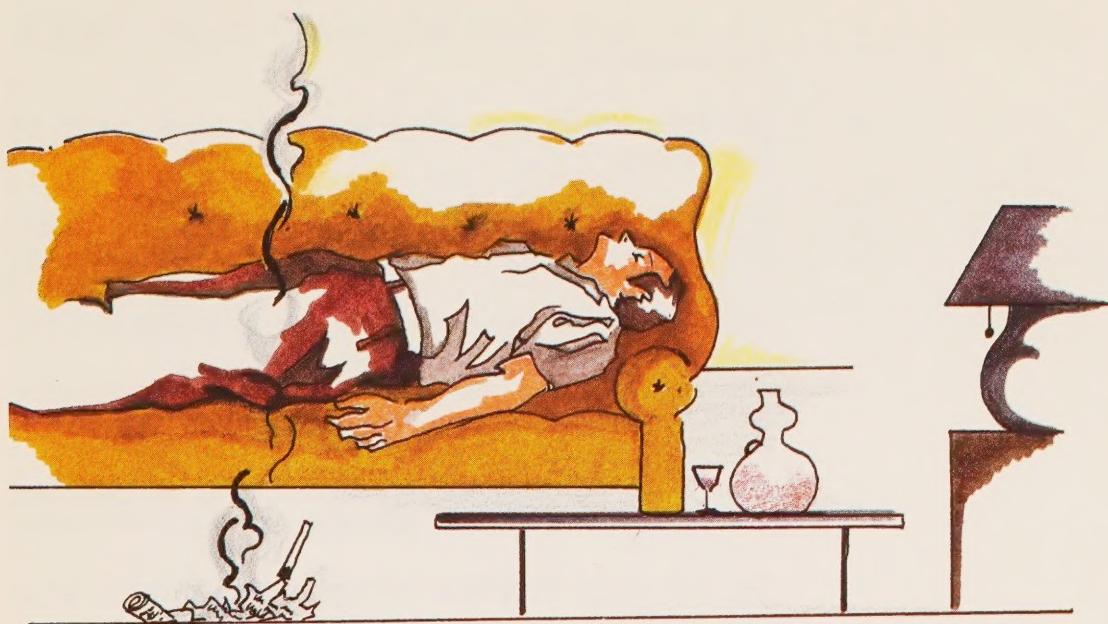
ULC

CGA

WH



THE CAUSES



Careless smoking is responsible for one-third of fatal home fires. A cigarette dropped into the folds of a chair can smolder for hours and produce enough carbon monoxide to kill. A comfy couch can be as dangerous as a bed, especially if the smoker is sleepy or drinking alcohol. One-third of adult fire victims are impaired during a fire. If you or a family member drink to excess, and smoke, be warned. Non-smokers and drinkers need not feel smug. Remember, two-thirds of the fire fatalities are 'not' impaired.

Smokers who light up in bed are dangerous but realize that nicotine fits may not always be relegated to the daytime hours.

Do your house guests smoke? Do you take in boarders? Is there a family member that drinks and smokes in a favorite chair? Take steps to protect yourself and family. Stick a smoke alarm in every bedroom and over that favored chair.

"I woke up smelling smoke. It was pitch black in the bedroom and there was my wife lying beside me and puffing away. I was furious and asked her to put it out. Then I realized, she was sound asleep! As a habit she kept a package of cigarettes on the dresser. On that night she grabbed a cigarette and, without waking up, lit up! She was sleep-smoking!" — Near Victim

HOT TIPS

- Do not keep cigarettes, lighters or ash trays in the bedroom.
- Do keep deep ash trays in every other room of the house.
- Never balance an ash tray on the arm of a chair, on your lap or leave it in any precarious position.
- Do keep ash trays in the middle of stable tables.
- Do not allow the ash trays to become 'catch-all's' for gum wrappers and other paper bits.
- Check all the ash trays before going to bed but don't empty them until morning.
- Do not keep matches within sight or reach of a child.

Note: If you must clean an ash tray at night, dump the contents into a large coffee or juice tin. NEVER dump the ashes in the garbage.

If you plan to ban smoking in your home, provide smoking pals with a large, sand-filled ash tray. Stand it in a windless area outside the house.

Note: It would be difficult to keep a child from playing with fire if he's determined to do so but no need to fan the flames. Do not keep lighters or matches within easy reach.

There are no butts about it, quitting is the best solution but if you can't, take extra care. Realize that the lives around you depend on that care. Keep an eye on others who smoke, particularly at a party. Remember that cigarettes and alcohol can be a deadly combination.



Kitchen fires are the most frequent type of home fires and rank third on the fatal fire hit list. It's not hard to imagine how they start and certainly we have all had a close call or two. Take a good look at your kitchen. Can the window curtains graze your stove top, toaster or any potentially hot surface? Is the stove hood kept scrupulously clean or is it spotted with grease? Hot, splattering, sputtering grease can self-ignite. If you must deep fry, keep the fat under control and don't leave the stove area. A tight fitting lid must be kept close by. Invest in a CSA approved deep fryer that keeps the temperature regulated and the oil contained if you deep fry regularly.

Three types of grease fires and how they start:

- 1) Toss a wet potato into a sizzling pot of fat and the grease may splatter, touch the burner and – a fire!
- 2) Grease expands and bubbles up as it cooks. Fill the pot beyond the half way mark and – a fire!
- 3) Do you keep a pan of fat on a back burner? Turn on the wrong burner by mistake and – a fire!

"I was standing right there, right over the chip pan. It just burst into flames. I thought oil needed a spark or something to set it off. I just didn't realize it could go up like that. I didn't know what to do." – Fire Victim

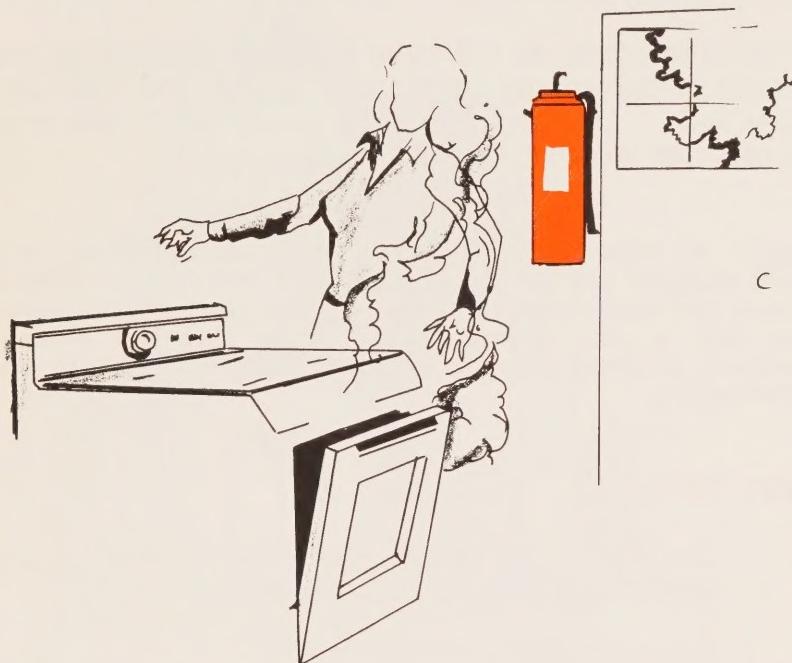
The moment at which a material turns into gas and ignites is called 'the ignition point'. Here is an example: Have you ever popped a pizza box in the oven 'just for a sec' only to smell the scorched box moments later? That smell is the cardboard turning into gas. Heat the pizza up, but remove the box first!

HOT TIPS

- Never touch or attempt to carry a flaming pot. It's too hot to hold and if you do manage to carry it more than a few feet the contents may spill over, burn you and set the home on fire. Protect your hand, smother the flame with a pot lid, turn off the heat and wait.
- If you have a stove fire, call the fire department.
- Do not throw flour on a grease fire. Flour may explode.
- Do not use dish towels to touch a hot pot handle. The towel may drag on the burner. Keep flame-resistant pot holders nearby.
- Keep a pot lid that is big enough to smother grease fires beside the stove.
- Oven fires will self extinguish if you keep the oven door closed and turn off the heat. No peeking for at least five minutes.
- Microwaves are touted as one of the safer appliances but if you accidentally leave a twist tie or other metal bit on the food, 'arcing' may occur. In case of fire, unplug the machine and do not open the microwave door.
- Liquid may be 'superheated' in a microwave which means that liquid may be heated beyond the point of vaporization. Although the liquid may show no signs of boiling, if moved, it may erupt and scald. A swig of superheated liquid may cause severe burns to the mouth.
- Make the stove controls easy to read from a distance. Mark the 'off' with a bright red dot.

- Do not set grocery bags on or near the stove.
- Treats should not be kept in a cupboard near the stove. A sweet tooth attack may be fatal to a child who reaches for the treats.

Note: What is pyrolysis and why should you care? Over a long period of time, a wall, cupboard, or any combustible surface that is constantly exposed to high temperatures, will dry out. Chemical changes will occur and the 'ignition temperature' of the combustible is lowered. Eventually, heat alone can start a fire.



A multi-purpose fire extinguisher belongs in the kitchen. Bracket it to the wall, near an exit and not too close to the stove. Otherwise, should a stove fire break out, it may become inaccessible.

"A pan of oil burst into flames at dinner time. The flames shot up into the overhanging stove hood. I managed to cover the pan with a lid and that was that. Or so we thought! The gasses had 'super-heated' and escaped into the ventilation system. Later that night, a neighbor called to tell us that our roof was on fire."
— Fire Victim

Faulty heating and electrical equipment are the second major cause of fatal home fires. Two big offenders are overburdened wiring and improper fusing. There is more.

"How was I to know the cord was frayed. It was under the rug. I put it there so no one would trip over it. I never thought that the constant walking over the rug would wear it down." – Fire Victim

Space heaters, frayed or damaged electrical cords, extension cords used as permanent wiring or draped over nails, homemade or unapproved fixtures and appliances, wattage of light bulb too high for fixture, damaged or spliced appliance cords, fixtures or appliances containing bare wires, appliance plugs that heat up and kerosene heaters filled with gasoline, are just a sample of fires waiting to happen.

Extension cords do not have capacity to carry as much electrical current as permanent wiring and may easily overheat. Using light-weight cords with heavy-duty appliances will also cause problems.

Note: An extension cord should be at least as heavy as the cord plugged into it. Continuous wear and tear on extension cords can also make them break down. Nailing the cords to the wall is also unacceptable. Make sure the cords are properly inserted into the outlets. Poor contact may cause overheating.

HOT TIPS

- Do not plug more than two power hungry appliances into the same electrical circuit.
- Octopus plugs, or sockets that multiply the use of one socket, should only be used with extreme caution.
- Allow air to circulate around televisions, stereos and radios.
- Do not wrap an electrical cord around a hot appliance.
- Check switches and outlets in your home twice a year. If they are warm to the touch, have them examined immediately.
- Unplug small electrical appliances such as irons, hairdryers and such, when not in use.
- Do not yank a cord out of a socket. Grip the plug at the electrical outlet and pull gently.

- Put safety caps in unused electrical outlets if you have a child running about or visiting.
- Never remove the grounding prong on a three-prong plug. (Power tools should be equipped with a three-prong plug. If not, a label should be on the tool indicating that it is double insulated.)
- Light switches must not be located within reach of the sink or bath.



"We put an approved nightlight in his room by his bed. I never thought of a pillow falling over the light and catching on fire. I just never thought."
— Parent of Fire Victim

Introduce yourself to the **fuse box**. Notice the 'main switch'? This is where the power enters the house. Hands off! Unless you are dealing with a blown fuse or a dire emergency, call an electrician if you suspect trouble. The box or breaker panel distributes electricity to different parts of the house. If a circuit develops a fault, the individual fuse will blow or trip and the electrical current will be interrupted. In other words, the fuse burns and blows before the wire burns and starts a fire.

DANGER!!! Something is wrong with the electrical system when fuses continually blow, appliances take too long to heat up, the lights dim and the picture on the television shrinks.

HOT TIPS

Toys can catch or cause a fire. Electrical toys that run on the house current must bear the ULC and CSA symbols. The casing of a battery operated toy must never heat up. Toddlers tend to drag their stuffed friends behind them, so make sure the stuffing and clothes of dolls and teddies are fire resistant.

- Have a rusty fuse box checked by a qualified electrician. Water could be seeping in and eroding the connections.
- Do not plug a 30 amp fuse into a 15 amp circuit, or vice versa for that matter. Substituting a 20 or 30 amp fuse could cause a fire.
- Normal household circuits require a 15 amp fuse.
- Since 15 amp fuses frequently pop, have extras on hand.
- Before tampering with the fuse box, turn off the power.
- P-type fuses reduce the possibility of a fire in the fuse panel and older fuses without the letter 'P' should be replaced.
- D-type fuses should be used on circuits which power motorized equipment such as air-conditioners and power tools. Its safety features are similar to a type 'P' fuse.

Furnaces



JANUARY							JULY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31							31						

FEBRUARY							AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31					29	30	31				

MARCH							SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31					29	30	31				

APRIL							OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31					29	30	31				

MAY							NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31					29	30	31				

JUNE							DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31					29	30	31				

Most home owners employ a company to fuel and service the furnace, in which case your fire safety concerns are minimal. Nevertheless, you might want to make your own visual inspection at least once a year. Check for rust spots and see that the flue and all pipes are tightly connected. Peek in and see that the air filter is not too dirty.

HOT TIPS

- Be sure to keep the area around the furnace clear. In particular, keep flammables, such as floor polishers and strippers, away from the pilot light.
- Do not lean anything up against the furnace or against the air vents.
- If the pilot light on a gas furnace goes out, ventilate the area and have it relit by a professional.

Note: Additions or alterations to your home's wiring must be inspected by Ontario Hydro.

Fireplaces



Creosote is a gummy, tar-like deposit that builds up in a chimney. Heat can set it on fire. Clean out the chimney at least once a year, and more often if it is a wood burning appliance. Cut down on creosote buildup by only burning seasoned wood.

HOT TIPS

- A sturdy fire screen or heat resistant door is not an accessory. It is a must.
- Combustible furniture, and other flammables such as pillows and rugs, must be kept at least five feet from a fireplace or woodstove.
- Never use flammable liquids, such as kerosene or barbecue lighting fluid, to start a fire in an indoor fireplace.
- Do not close the damper off until you are absolutely sure the fire is out.
- Check the chimney for loose or cracked bricks.

Wood Stoves

If the wood supply is plentiful, wood stoves are economical, not to mention charming. However, if you are even thinking about buying a wood stove, investigate, read, talk to salespeople and wood stove owners. Research!

Do you plan to install the wood stove yourself or have a professional do it? Preference is, have a pro do it, since most of the problems connected with wood stoves are caused by poor installation. Either way, after installation, obtain a second professional opinion of the work.

Note: A building permit is required before installation. Check with your local municipality office. Copies of the Ontario Building Code, National Building Code and Canadian Heating, Ventilation and Air-Conditioning Code are available at your local library or Government Book Store.

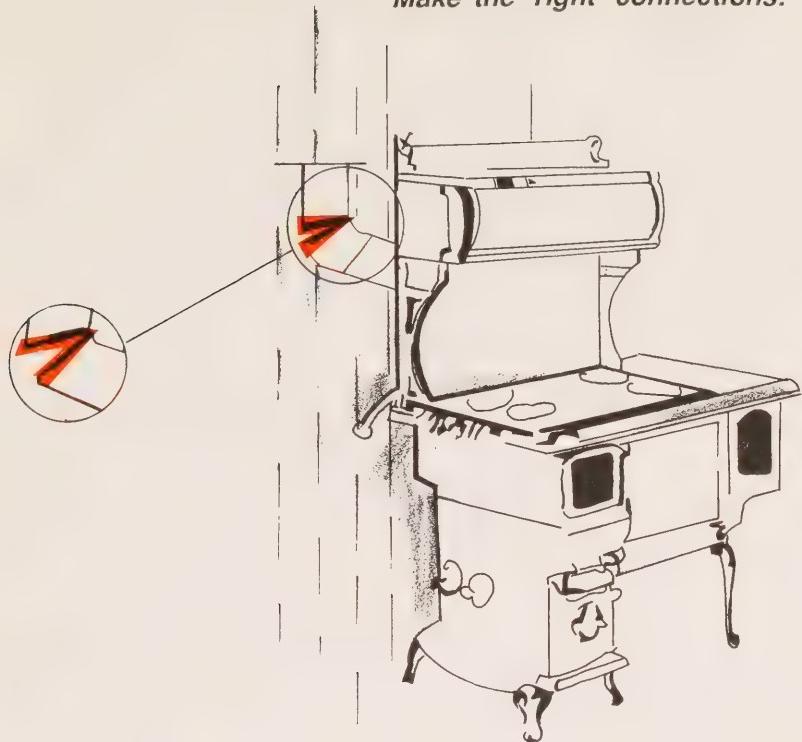
The wood stove must comply to CSA standard B-366.2 (ULC standard S627). The installation must comply with CSA standard B-365. For further information, write to:

CSA
178 Rexdale Boulevard
Rexdale, Ontario M9W 1R3

Look for these symbols of approval:

CSA ULC CGA WH

Make the 'right' connections.



Before you let the look of one particular stove sway your choice, decide on the application and location of the stove. Wood and coal stoves may consume oxygen from the interior of the house. If a stove is in an area that does not have a sufficient air supply, your whole family could be asphyxiated. Installation directions and regulations are stated in the manufacturer's instructions. Read them carefully.

HOT TIPS

- Some stoves have been certified to stand on combustible floors. Nevertheless, stoves, furnaces, service water heaters, space heaters, or an appliance which uses solid fuel, should be mounted on either cleared, packed ground, a concrete floor, or a group of hollow masonry bricks arranged at right angles to allow for air circulation. Special approved 'shields' are available.

"We saw the antique wood stove in an old fashioned general store and fell in love with it. Unfortunately, the feeling was not mutual. It burned down our cottage and nearly killed us. Never again will we put aesthetics over common sense." — Fire Victim

- A chimney designed for oil and gas may not be able to handle the high heat intensity from wood. Hire an expert to check out the flue pipe and chimney.
- Recycle the garbage, do not burn it.
- Look for logs with splits in the ends. Heavy logs may be wet. Ideally, trees should be cut when the sap has run out. If split, stacked and covered, it will be ready for use the following year.

Note: Talk to your home insurance agent before installation.

A smoke alarm and fire extinguisher must be kept within a reasonable distance of a wood or coal burning appliance.

- Antique wood stoves may have that certain allure but they will be missing a good many safety features.
- During normal use, a stove surface may reach a whopping 600°F. Contact burns are common, so buy a stove guard.

There is a great deal more to learn so send away for more information.

Info at your fingertips:

*"An Old Flame Rekindled" free booklet
Ministry of Energy, Corporate Relations
56 Wellesley Street West
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2B7*

*"Residential Wood Heating: A Home Owner's Guide"
booklet
Energy, Mines and Resources Canada
580 Booth Street
Publications Rooms 838
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0E4*

THE HEAT LINE is operated by Energy, Mines and Resources Canada. Call 1-800-387-0733.

Space Heaters



A CSA or ULC approved and well cared for space heater will not pose a threat. How it is used is the problem. Space heaters are not designed to replace home heating. Always keep a 90 cm (3 ft.) clearance on all sides.

HOT TIPS

- Never use a space heater in the bathroom.
- Do not leave a child with a working space heater.
- Use only in a well ventilated room.
- Connect it to a grounded outlet.
- Do not dress near a space heater or drape clothes over it.
- Unplug when not in use.

Note: Never substitute fuels in fuel-burning heaters and do not fill the tank in the house. Filling it to the brim may also cause problems as fuel expands as it warms up. Remember, a fuel-burning heater gobbles up oxygen and produces carbon monoxide, so only use it in a well ventilated room. If tipped, the heater must automatically turn off.

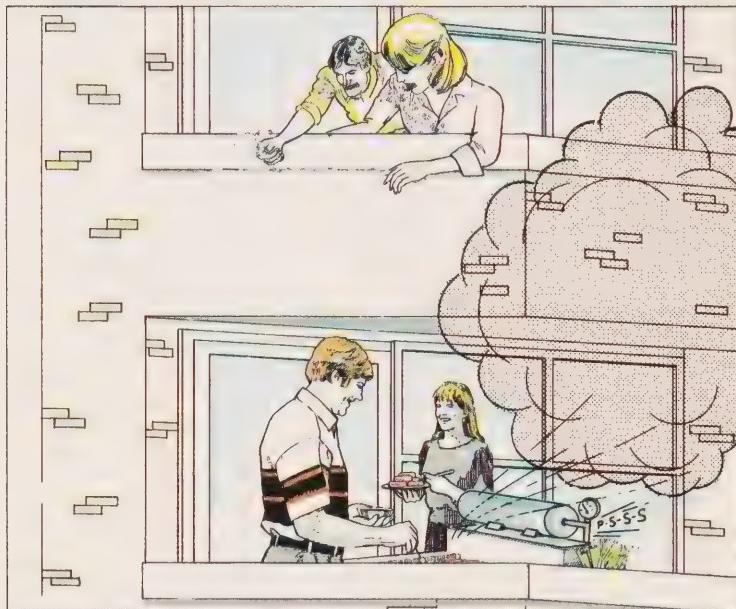
BARBECUES

On any given summer day, there may be three million barbecues cooking away in Canada. While many chefs may know how to rustle up a mean burger, their fire safety awareness may be non-existent. First, a barbecue must be placed at least three metres from windows or combustible surfaces. It must be stable and kept in a sheltered place.

Most new barbecue buyers can choose between electrical, propane or the traditional charcoal fueled models. Before you buy, consider the pluses and minuses of each type.

Propane or gas barbecues are completely safe providing they are maintained and stored correctly. Take care moving, filling, storing and reconnecting the cylinder to the barbecue.

Note: To check the connection between barbecue and fuel tank, fill a coffee cup with water and add a few drops of detergent. Turn the cylinder valve on. Coat the connection with the liquid. If you spot any bubbles, there is a leak. Metal tools used to tighten the connections might cause sparks to fly.



HOT TIPS

- Never cook on a barbecue indoors or on an apartment balcony.
- Read the instructions that come with the barbecue.
- Before you light it, lift the lid to let any trapped fumes escape.
- Light the barbecue immediately after the gas is turned on.
- Have the tank tested every ten years. If there are any signs of corrosion, damage, wear or tear, replace it.
- When taking the tank for a refill, do not lie it on its side.
- Do not store the tank inside the house. Leaking gas can accumulate in an enclosed area. Left in a well ventilated shed, air currents will disburse the gases.

Electric barbecues are an alternative to the gas-fueled types. They heat up quickly and efficiently but, like any electrical appliance, need special care, particularly since it is used and kept outside.

HOT TIPS

- Unplug, cover and store the barbecue when not in use.
- Faulty cooking elements could pose a hazard. Examine them occasionally.
- Route the cord away from the hot surface.
- Do not use it near a swimming pool.

Candles in Jack-O-Lanterns are passe. Not only could a trick-or-treater dip a sleeve into Jack and catch on fire but pumpkins do get bowled over with great regularity. Put a battery operated flashlight inside Jack instead.

Charcoal barbecues are quickly becoming relics and lighting the charcoal, a lost art. Since charcoal is so difficult to light, some people try taking shortcuts such as pouring gasoline into the barbecue. Kerosene, gasoline or naphtha are all inappropriate fire starter fuels. Use only barbecue lighting fluid on the charcoal and put it away right after use. Read the instructions. Coals must be soaked in fluid five minutes before attempting to light up.

HOT TIPS

- Never add more lighting fluid when the flames have started. A flame may travel up the stream and ignite the whole can.
- Keep a bucket of water handy perchance the fire gets out of hand.
- Smother the smoldering coals with a lid and let sit overnight. Stir the coals before leaving them and, if necessary, douse with water. Do not empty coals in the garbage until morning.

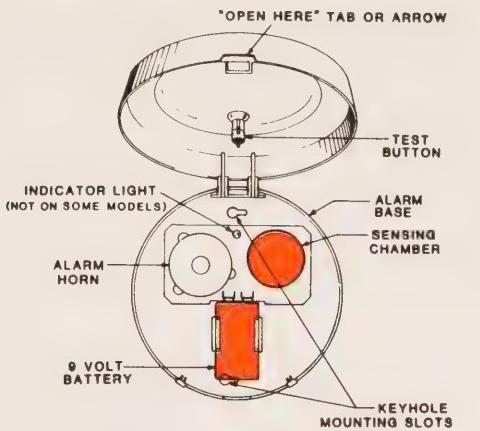
Info at your fingertips:

*Consumer Information Centre
Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations
555 Yonge Street
Toronto, Ontario M7G 2H6*

(416) 963-1111 / 1-800-268-1142

SMOKE ALARMS

WHAT IS INSIDE A SMOKE ALARM



The smoke alarm is the single most important fire safety device ever invented.

There are two basic types:

- 1) A PHOTOELECTRIC alarm uses a light source and photocell. When smoke particles reflect the light back into the photocell, the alarm is triggered.
- 2) An IONIZATION alarm produces air molecules called ions. A small electric current runs around inside a chamber. When smoke enters the chamber, the electrical current is interrupted and the alarm is set off. ("Combo" alarms are also available.)

Note: Fires go through four basic stages: the 'incipient' stage (no visible smoke), the smoldering stage (visible smoke), the flame stage and, hot on its heels, the heat stage.

Smoke alarms may be wired directly into the electrical system, battery operated, or plugged into an electrical outlet. Each system has positive and negative aspects.

One may not hear a lone battery operated unit whistling away in the basement of a three storey house. Interconnected units will sound simultaneously.

The battery unit has one major flaw – it needs batteries! No surprise there but, if you are like most of us, remembering to replace the batteries is a major feat. Here is an idea. Change the batteries on your birthday – give yourself a present.

Units that plug into the wall travel well and are perfect at a rented cottage or on the road, however, they can easily be unplugged by a child or pet. Fixed units are preferred over the long term.

Now, where to stick them?

Do Not's

Do not put a smoke alarm in the kitchen. Burnt toast or an overcooked dinner will set it off. Out of frustration, you may be tempted to rip the whole contraption down. **Do not** put it in or near the bathroom. Steam will also set it off. **Do not** put it near an air register. You will want one in the basement, but **do not** put it near the furnace exhaust (mount it at the top of the stairway instead). Finally, **do not** stick it on uninsulated exterior walls. Temperature extremes might affect the batteries.

Do's

"You know how teenagers are, so private. She always slept with the door shut. The fire started in the wall in her bedroom. By the time the smoke escaped under the door to reach the smoke alarm in the hall, it was too late. My daughter never woke up." – Parent of Fire Victim

Do put at least one alarm on each floor in central locations. **Do** place one at the top of each stairwell and, if your hall is longer than 900 cm (30ft.), put one unit at each end. **Do** put alarms in rooms with bunk beds. We know that smoke rises, therefore, children who sleep on the top bunk are especially vulnerable. **Do** put one in the bedrooms, especially if doors are kept closed. Since it is difficult to regulate the behavior of all your guests, **do** put one in the guest bedroom too.

"Dead air space" exists where wall and ceiling meet. Mount the alarm on the ceiling at least 6 inches (15 cm) out from the wall and two feet (60 cm) away from the corner. It may not always be possible to position the unit on the ceiling so, if you must, mount it on the wall 10 inches (25 cm) down from the ceiling. Keep it away from the corner.

Buy extra smoke alarms for the cottage or camp. Another place where detectors are sorely needed is in Grandma's home. Some senior citizens remain unprotected because they have physical limitations which prevent them from installing and maintaining smoke alarms.

Need to buy a great gift? How about giving a smoke alarm?

HOT TIPS

- No matter what, a smoke alarm belongs in the hall.
- Smoke alarms won't work if they are clogged with dust, so vacuum them every six months.
- Test an alarm by waving a stick of incense, the whiff of a candle, or smoldering bit of cotton string, under its nose. It should sound within 60 seconds. To silence the alarm after a test, wave a newspaper under the alarm for up to 60 seconds. (This fans the smoke out of the unit.) To extinguish the incense stick, soak it in water, and it can be reused once it dries out. (Pressing the 'tester' button may only tell you if the battery is charged.)
- Make sure your children know what your smoke alarm sounds like. The signal may sound like the buzz of the burglar alarm or the stove timer.
- All detectors sold in Canada must bear the ULC symbol.
- The factory sets the sensitivity level of the detector. Do not tamper with it.
- Most hydro powered smoke alarms have a power on indicator light. Is it on?

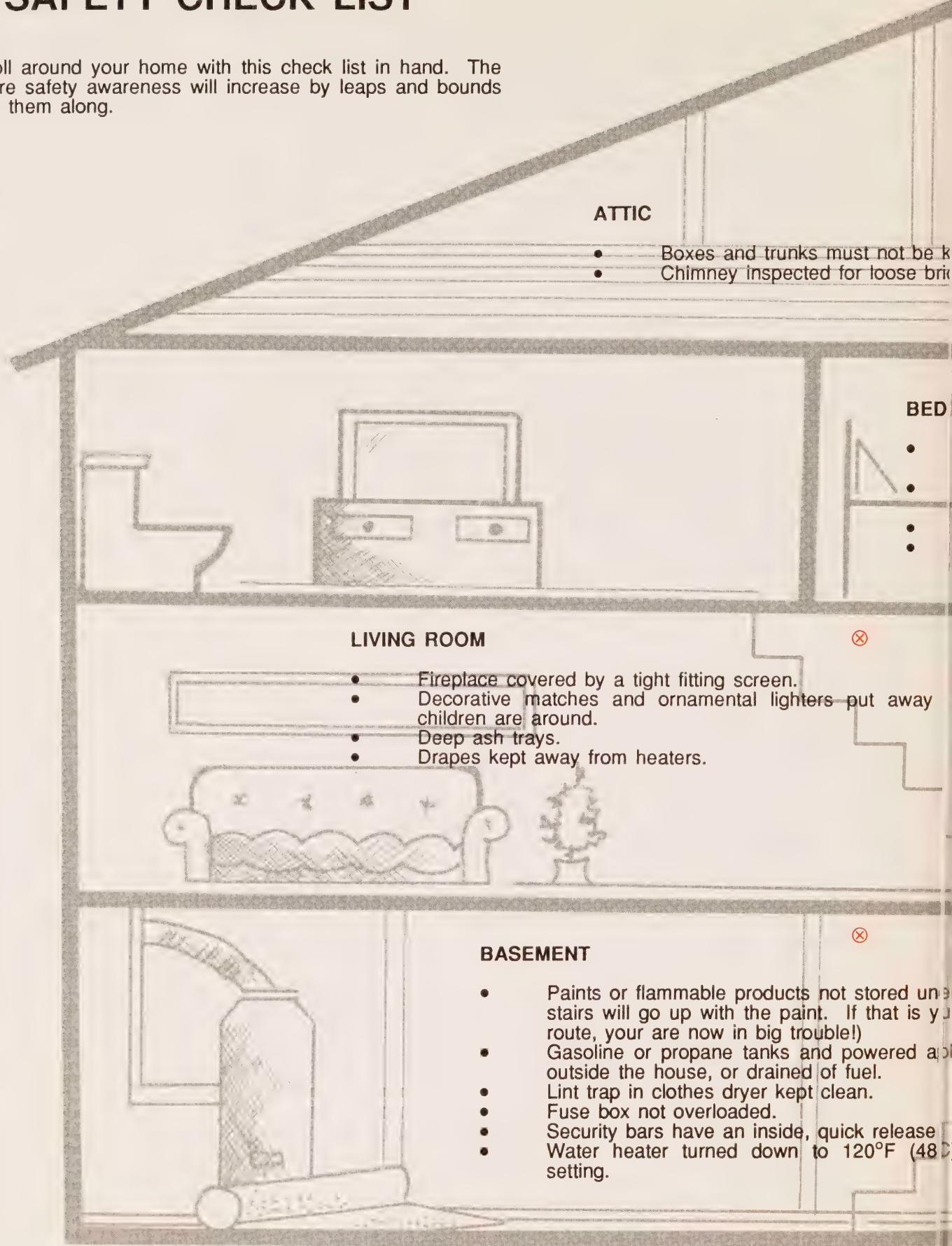
Note: If you are planning on building your own home, budget for a residential sprinkler system. Too expensive you say? Talk it over with your home insurance agent. Over the long term, and depending on your policy, you may not only save money but your life!

A commercially sold wallpaper can release a non-toxic gas when heated to 300°. The gas will in turn set off an ionization smoke alarm.

"Last Christmas we gave my Grandma a special gift - we had her home inspected by a firefighter and we installed smoke alarms." — Granddaughter

FIRE SAFETY CHECK LIST

Take a stroll around your home with this check list in hand. The children's fire safety awareness will increase by leaps and bounds if you invite them along.



Indicates smoke alarm location.

GENERAL

- Fire extinguishers mounted near exits.
- Chimney and furnace checked and cleaned annually, more often if it's a wood burning appliance.
- Outside Christmas lights not left up all year round.
- Extension cords not run under rugs or used as permanent wiring.
- Correct wattage bulbs in lamps.
- Ash trays, fireplace and barbecue ashes left to stand before being tossed out.
- Pressurized aerosol cans located in a cool place.
- Broken wire or electrical appliances repaired or checked by a professional.
- Working smoke alarms on each floor and in each bedroom if doors are kept closed.

Note: Keep bedroom closed if there are no smoke alarms in the house.



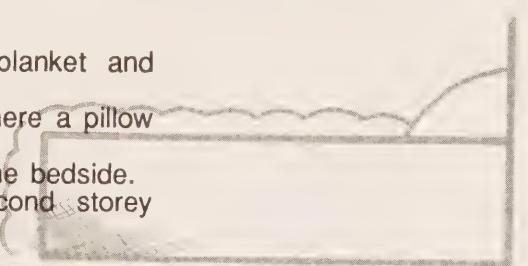
OM

Electric blanket not covered by a second blanket and switched off during the day.

Nightlight not located too close to a bed or where a pillow or blanket might fall over it.

Cigarettes, ash trays and matches not left by the bedside.

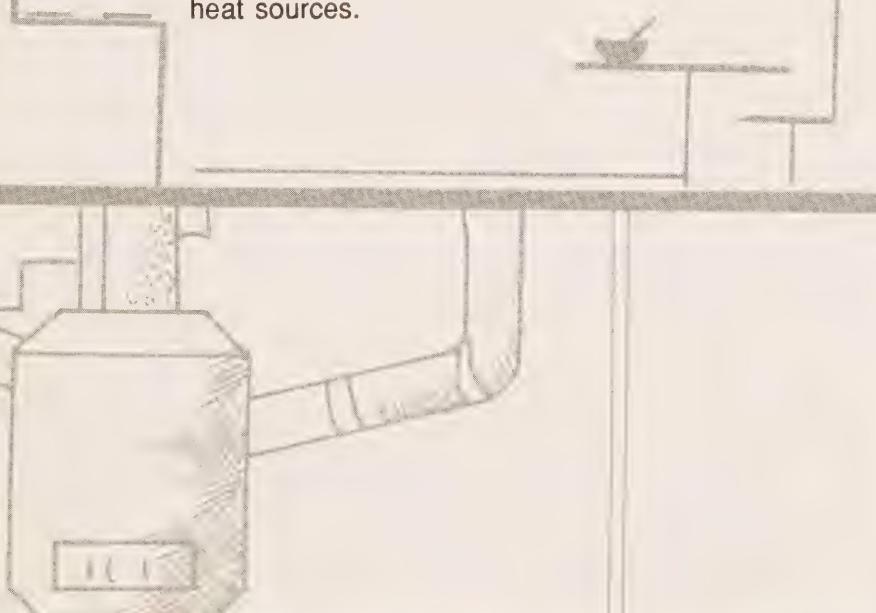
Escape ladder or knotted rope kept in second storey bedrooms.



KITCHEN

- Pot lid kept permanently handy near stove.
- Goodies not stored above stove.
- Pot holders, dish rags or any materials stored away from heat sources.

stairs. (The
only escape
ances stored
or on 'low'



STORAGE OF FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS



"I was puttering around in the basement and balanced my cigarette on the corner of the bench for a minute. The cigarette dropped onto a can and I leaned down to get it. The next thing I knew I was in the hospital. Those tins must have been sitting in the basement for a decade. I didn't even know what was in them." – Fire Victim

Combustible liquids form vapors, and given the right circumstances, can self-ignite. A rag soaked in paint thinner, lemon oil, wax or such, may smolder and burst into flames all by itself. This is called 'spontaneous combustion'. Flammable liquids such as gasoline, kerosene, acetone, adhesives and paint thinners must be stored in cool, well ventilated areas. Gasoline must be kept in tightly capped, approved for this purpose containers, and should not be kept in the house at all. It goes without saying, never smoke around a combustible liquid.

HOT TIPS

- Store used rags in air tight metal containers and away from direct sunlight or heat.
- Label all containers.
- Clean up spills.
- Do not store cans of paint under the basement stairs. (In a fire, these cans will ignite easily and possibly burn your only means of escape.)
- Wash out any clothing or rags that have been soaked in flammable liquids thoroughly. Do not toss them into a dryer unless rinsed. The heat from the dryer may ignite the fabric.
- Never drop a can of flammable liquid down a garbage chute.

Never discard a can of flammable liquid by tossing it in the garbage. Call your local public works office or garbage disposal unit and ask for a pick-up or address of drop-off site.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

There are four types of fires: Class A – wood, cloth, paper, etc.; Class B – flammable liquids, oils, fats, gasoline, etc.; Class C – charged or live electrical wiring, appliances, power motors, etc.; and Class D – combustible metals, magnesium, potassium, etc.

If you use a Class A extinguisher on a Class C fire, you may electrocute yourself. Fight a Class D fire with a Class A extinguisher and you will cause an explosion. Blast a Class B fire with a Class A extinguisher and you'll make the fire bigger. Now, remember all of this in the heat of the moment. Are you confused? You are not alone.

True, an ABC extinguisher will not help you fight a Class D fire, but unless your mag-wheels burst into flames, or you have some very strange hobbies, a Class D home fire is unlikely.

A portable lightweight extinguisher has a discharge time of up to eight to ten seconds. There is no time to waste. Aim the discharge at the base of the fire and, for a second, keep up the spray after knock-down to reduce the chance of a flare up. Save a few seconds of discharge if you can. Despite your preventive efforts, the fire may start up again.

Fight a fire only if the home has been evacuated, the fire department has been called, your back is to an exit, the fire is small and contained in one area and you know what you are doing.

HOT TIPS

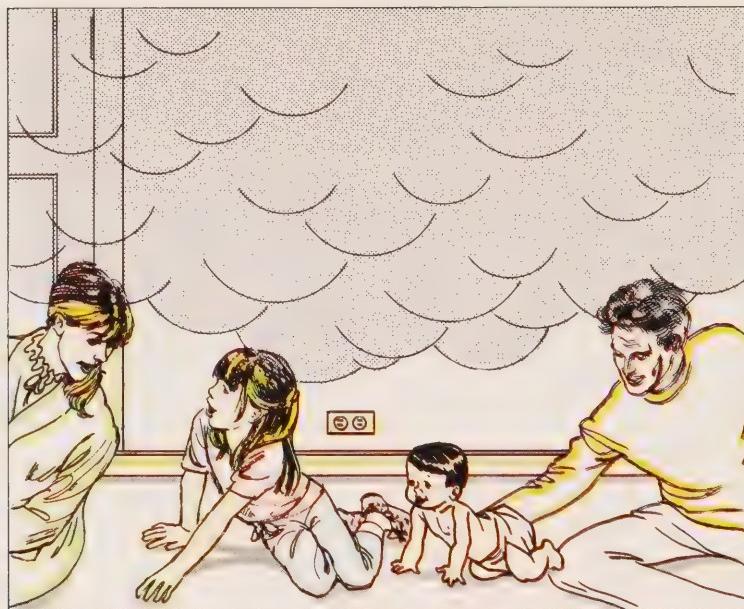
- Fire extinguishers must bear the ULC symbol.
- To prevent the powder from caking, every so often tip an ABC extinguisher over and give the bottom a tap.
- Do not teach a young child to operate an extinguisher. Children must run from a fire, not stay and fight.
- Read the label. It will tell you everything you need to know.

Buy a couple of ABC multi purpose extinguishers.

Inspect your extinguishers annually and keep them in accessible places, near exits and in hallways that lead to exits. Secure them to a wall and out of a small child's reach.

Never allow a fire to come between you and an exit.

THE GREAT ESCAPE



"I remember my dad standing at the top of the stairs in his jumbo boxer shorts and undershirt blowing the 'fire' whistle. The three of us would scramble out of bed, crawl down the stairs and end up shivering on the sidewalk. If we did everything just right, and we always did, we'd all have great steaming mugs of hot chocolate afterwards. Now it's my turn to do the same exercise with my children. I do not, however, wear boxer shorts." – Daughter and Mom

Smoke confuses, obscures vision, hides exit signs and escape routes. It is black. It billows down halls and fills every crevice. There is more.

Smoke contains nitric oxide which turns into nitric acid when it mixes with the moisture of eyes, nose and throat. The pain is excruciating. The eyes tear and eventually snap shut. Carbon dioxide speeds up breathing allowing carbon monoxide to enter the body 200 to 300 times faster than oxygen. Carbon monoxide is drawn into the lungs leaving a person dazed, disoriented and, finally, dead.

Plan for a speedy exit. It should take moments to escape from a multi-level house fire. Draw a diagram of your house. Mark all the possible exits, including windows. Keep in mind, small children need practice. Left to their own devices, a terrified child may scramble under a bed and hide. Children must be told that 'nothing' is more important than their safety and if they hear the detector go off, they are to 'crawl' out of the house.

Time for the rehearsal. Unless your children are under six, do this exercise at night, in the dark. Everyone in bed and undressed? (In a real fire, moments spent trying to wiggle into a pair of pants could prove fatal.) Set off the alarm. Roll out of the bed, drop to the floor, shout "Fire in the kitchen" or "Fire in the basement". Feel the door. If it is not hot, brace your shoulder against the door and peek into the hall. No smoke? Good. Keep low and out you go. (If there is smoke, get out through the window.) Everyone must meet in a predesignated area outside the house.

Close the door behind you. ONCE OUT, STAY OUT!

HOT TIPS

- Hold regular family fire drills and choose different fire locations each time, i.e. attic, family room, etc.
- Draw up an escape plan for homes other than your own. For example, at the cottage, at Grandpa's house. Better yet, have a fire drill in those locations.
- After a drill, meet in a prearranged place.
- It may be a serious mistake to make one child responsible for another child during a fire.
- Everyone should know the emergency number off by heart.
- Call the fire department from a neighbor's house.

"The first time I set the smoke alarm off, my kids thought that I had burned dinner again. I gave them a lecture neither will forget. The next time the alarm went off, my son scrambled out of the house and waited on the curb. My five year old daughter didn't appear. We live in an old house and the warped doors often stick. Panicked, she couldn't open the door, nor did she know how to push out the window screen. It occurred to me that children are punished for breaking things and, in a real fire, they might not realize that it's OK to pick up a stool and hurl it through a window or ram a screen until it breaks." – Parent

APARTMENT AND HOTEL FIRES

"Oh yes, I heard the alarm but, you know, I'm a wee bit deaf, so I didn't hear it all that well." – Grandma

It is a plain fact that it is always better to be outside a burning building than inside but, in highrise fires, it may not be possible to simply leave during a fire. Walking down 20 flights of stairs may be impossible.

In a house fire, the rule is simple – get out and stay out. That rule does not necessarily apply to highrise apartment dwellers. Alarms, sprinkler systems, designated escape routes and building codes, have made newly built highrises relatively fire resistant. In fact, highrise buildings, defined as being seven storeys or higher, are considered to be safer from the spread of fire than a house.

In a modern apartment or hotel building, each suite is separated by solid masonry walls and floors. A fire could possibly destroy your neighbor's apartment and leave your suite intact.

Most highrise fire deaths occur in the suite where the fire originated. While it is rare for other building occupants to die as a result of the fire, sometimes they do because of smoke, poor fire safety education and incorrect behavior. They are the killers.

What do we do if the fire alarm blasts in the middle of the night? Absolutely nothing, right? Perhaps we don't respond because we are lazy, or we believe it to be a false alarm, or maybe because we wouldn't want to be seen standing around a lobby in our flannel nightie and pig shaped slippers.

If you must make a hasty window escape, remember to close the door before opening or breaking a window. Remove any jagged glass or toss a blanket over the window base to prevent cuts. If there is no ladder, slide through the window on your stomach and hang from the sill. Let go and bend your knees. But don't jump out a window unless you have to. A three-storey fall is fatal to most people.



The smoke tent.

Special Plans for Special Needs

The people most likely to die or become seriously injured in a fire are the impaired, the very young, the very old and those who are disabled. Depending on your circumstances, here are some ideas you might find useful.

A telephone and whistle near the bedside of elderly or physically disabled people will help if they are trapped. If possible, locate their bedrooms on the main floor. If not, develop a special second floor escape plan. Smoke alarms designed for hearing impaired persons are available.

Info at your fingertips:

*The Canadian Hearing Society
Technical Services
271 Spadina Road
Toronto, Ontario M5R 2V3*

(416) 964-9595

Let's just say it is a fire. What then? The fire might have started a long time before the alarm went off. You have no idea how much time you have, where or how big the fire is.

Rule number one, DON'T OPEN THE DOOR. Feel it first to see if it is hot. If it is not hot, press your weight against the door and ease it open slowly. Anything happening out there? If there is lots of smoke, it might be best to stay in the suite. If not, you have two choices. You can stay put, or make a crawl for it.

Staying Put

New Ontario highrises are structured to contain a fire within each suite. Unless the fire is in your suite, or directly below you, staying put is worth considering (particularly if you are toting a toddler or the prospect of descending dozens of stairs is as scary as the fire).

If you decide to stay put and smoke is in the area, hang something bright out the window to let the firefighters know you are there. If the phone works, tell the fire department where you are and what you plan to do.

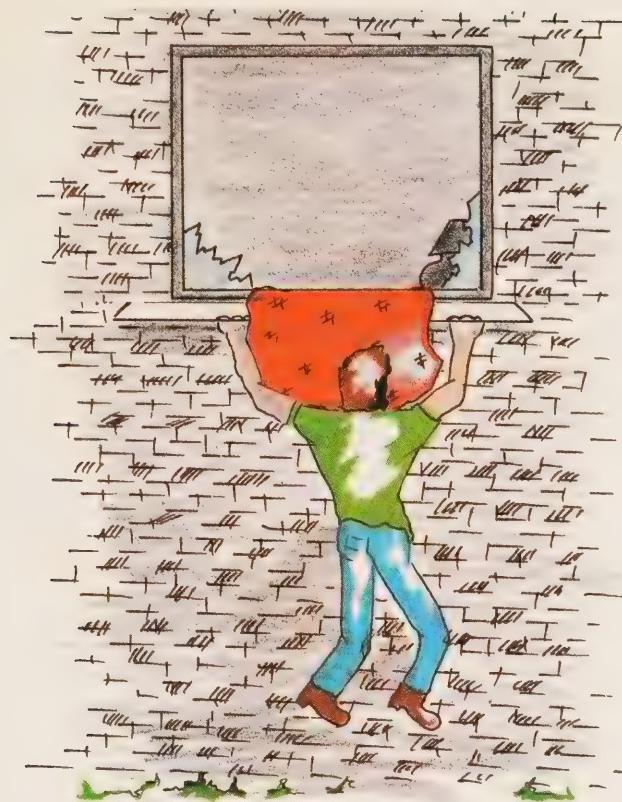
YOU CAN SEE SMOKE, TASTE SMOKE, FEEL SMOKE AND STOP SMOKE.

If there is smoke out in the hall, seal yourselves in the room with tape or stuff sheets and towels around the door and windows. Wet or dampen them if possible. Watch it! Smoke can easily creep in, through and around vents and pipes. Plug, stuff and block. Seal off rooms if you have to. Disconnect all appliances.

Have the family sit down on the floor and wait.

Stay low. Make your way out to the balcony if you have one. Close the door but don't lock yourself out. If smoke billows up from below, lay down on the balcony.

If you do not have a balcony, open a window and stand in front of it. Make a smoke tent by holding the top of a sheet or blanket over your head. Lean out the window. The material must dangle behind and rest on the floor.



*Get the 'hang' of it
and avoid unnecessary injury.*

Getting Out

Feel the door. If it is cool, brace yourself against the door and open it, inch by inch. In case there is smoke out there, be prepared to slam the door shut. If you want to leave, stay low, crawl if you must. Have the children trail closely behind.

TAKE YOUR ROOM KEY WITH YOU. Most hotel doors and some apartment doors lock automatically. If the smoke becomes too intense, you might have to return to your room.

Do not take the elevator. The heat may activate the call buttons and carry passengers to the fire floor! The elevator might also lose power.

How far from the stairwell to your suite? Count the doors. Remember, smoke rises and exit signs may disappear in the black smoke.

DO NOT GO INTO A SMOKEY STAIRWELL. Hot air rises. As you descend, the smoke will likely increase. Find another stairwell. There are at least two.

Don't go up to the roof expecting a dramatic Hollywood-style rescue either. Most roof doors are locked.

ONCE OUT, GET AWAY FROM THE BUILDING AND GO DIRECTLY TO YOUR PRE-ARRANGED MEETING PLACE! Sheets of glass or other debris may fall from the building. Tell the Fire Chief that you and family are safely out.

HOT TIPS

Fire safety kit for apartments or hotels:

- roll of wide tape (duct tape)
- flashlight
- travel smoke alarm

Make up this little kit and stash it by the door or in a suitcase.

- Ashes from the ash tray, aerosol cans, half empty bottles of cleaning liquids or any flammable liquid, should not be tossed down a chute. A garbage chute is not a hungry monster capable of digesting a junk diet. And forcing cartons, coat hangers and bundles of newspapers down will block the chute up.
- Do not use barbecues on balconies, never mind the nuisance they cause to the neighbors, or the carbon monoxide that might billow into the apartment – the sparks alone are enough of a problem. Propane barbecues are also a hazard. Propane is heavier than air. If the cylinder leaks, the fumes will likely waft into the apartment below. (So much for your good neighbor award.) And if you notice the leak, what then? You cannot carry it down an elevator or stairwell. Barbecues must not be used on balconies.
- Do not store flammable liquids in the locker, and since your neighbors might not adhere to this rather simple suggestion, don't go searching through a storage locker with a match or candle. (Or boom!)
- Where will a lit cigarette, flicked so carelessly over the balcony, land? Perhaps into an apartment below. Perhaps into the baby carriage parked on a lower balcony. Perhaps into a passing car or bag of groceries. One careless mistake can spell disaster for an innocent person. Butt out cigarettes properly and never flick them over a balcony.
- Make your own balcony an unwelcoming place for flying cigarette butts to land. Do not use it as a storage locker.
- Don't park in fire routes.

TEACHING FIRE SAFETY

Seldom do we imagine a toddler causing a fire. After all, it takes a certain amount of co-ordination to flick a lighter or strike a match. But, by substituting a disposable lighter for a car, a two year old can set himself on fire. Six month old babies can drag a large fireplace match across a stone fireplace and set houses on fire. It is never too early to start putting matches and lighters up, up and away. It is also never too early to teach fire safety.

When talking with very young children, compare matches to tools. We wouldn't use a toy car to hammer a nail, would we? Of course not. Ask your child if any of his friends play with matches. Remember that most children have been told not to tattletale, so here is a comparison that may be useful: "If your friend Johnny had a tummy ache and he told you not to tell an adult, would you tell anyway? Yes, you would tell because Johnny could be very sick. Children who play with matches could get hurt. You must tell on them to keep them safe."

Tots 'playing' with fire is one problem, but young children who we may feel are 'old enough to know better' need as much, if not more, fire safety education.

A young child seldom sets out to start a fire. The idea of playing with fire generally occurs at the precise moment the child spots a pack of matches or a lighter. The old saying, "Out of sight, out of mind" is the reason why firefighters continually say, "Put lighters and matches out of a child's sight and reach."

STOP, DROP AND ROLL. If clothes ever catch on fire, this is what you should do. Have the family practice 'putting each other out' by rolling one another up in blankets, rugs, or such. Senior citizens are especially prone to clothing fires.

Normal curiosity will prod children on. Normal child development demands that children test their new knowledge. Parents must be sensitive to where 'normal' interest stops and dangerous behavior begins.

The best way to teach fire safety to children is to harness that curiosity. A child may, for example, be caught poking the fire in the fireplace. This might be an opportunity to talk to a child about fire, show her how to position the logs so they don't spill out, why the

"I think she was plumb bored. Apparently she picked my matches up and just started lighting them. One match fell on her dress. Rather than call out, she tried to run into the bathroom and douse out the flames. By the time she screamed and I got to her, she was engulfed in flames." – Parent

fire gate must always be closed, how the flue works. By using the child's normal interest, a parent first acknowledges the interest, second, teaches a child about fire safety and, third, contains that interest.

On the other hand, another parent might catch a child poking the fire in the fireplace, reprimand him and march him off to his room. Out of spite perhaps, but more likely because of curiosity, he may decide to play with matches in the back of his closet, out in a field, behind the school, out of sight, where he isn't likely to be caught.



"My son was eight at the time, old enough to be trusted, old enough to know better. He pinched some matches from a coat pocket, took them into the basement and lit each match, one by one. One thing led to another and the fire got out of control. Instead of yelling for help, he came up the stairs, walked past his brother and I and headed out the door. He told our neighbor about the fire who called the fire station."

– Parent

Children know they are not supposed to touch fire, and knowing this often compounds the problem. If children are determined to play with fire, they will find a way to do just that. Under supervision, let them learn about fire and tell them explicitly that an adult must always be around when matches are used. By all means, show children the destructive power of fire (a drive past a burnt-out forest or house will do that) but never use fear as a teaching aid. Fire should be respected, not feared.

Of course, young children may not understand the properties of many substances. (Does gasoline burn? Why? How?) One child, for example, wanted to add a little realism to his miniature army fort. A teeny campfire in the middle of the fort would be just the thing, he thought. Carefully, with minute detail, he formed a campfire with toothpicks. Then he lit the fire, the fort and himself with a cup of gasoline.

Fire safety is not a lesson taught in a vacuum. While pumping gas into the car, or filling up a lawn mower, a parent could explain why people must not smoke near gasoline or kerosene. There are any number of everyday experiences that a parent can use to teach fire safety. Books, even movies, can all teach children some basic fire prevention tips.

THE MAKINGS OF A HERO

If you see a home on fire, here's what to do:

- Call the fire department.
- Whoop it up. Yell. Make noise. Do what you can to arouse the occupants of the home.
- Bang on all the doors and windows but do not break in. A blast of air will cause the fire inside to get bigger and produce even more smoke.
- If there is an accessible fire alarm, activate it.
- In rare cases, individuals have made a rescue but the best advice is to not enter the home. Be prepared to help in any way.
- Stand back. Let the fire fighters do their work. Parked cars and sightseers obstruct fire vehicles.

Note: Who called the fire department? A dozen people might mill around a fire all waiting for help, all assuming 'the other guy' made the call. Either do it yourself, or if you are administering aid, ASSIGN (point to and tell) an individual to make the call.

ARSON

Sometimes, not often, natural curiosity towards fire exceeds normal limits. In North America, the juvenile offender leads the pack of arsonists. While there are a few juvenile female offenders, most arsonists are male. Arson is a leading cause of mass murder world-wide! If your child is caught setting a fire, get him help!

"I didn't know he had this problem. Oh, I knew he liked the look of fire, but what child doesn't? He was often into mischief, but I don't believe he meant to hurt anyone. If he knew someone was in the building, he would not have set that fire. He needed help a long time ago, but I couldn't bring myself to admit it." – Parent

A CHILD WHO REPEATEDLY SETS FIRES NEEDS HELP.

Fire Facts

One-third of the 10,000 arson fires set in Canada are set by juveniles or young offenders. In Ontario, two out of 10 fires have been deliberately set.

There are ways to protect your home and business from arson. Join a Neighborhood Watch program. Get to know your neighbours. Keep your lawn and garden clutter-free. Report any type of vandalism and notify the police of suspicious behaviour. Keep in mind, without intervention, kids that set small fires today may very well go on to set big fires tomorrow.

SCALDS AND BAD BURNS

Hot water burns like fire. It destroys skin and leaves lifelong scars. Irreparable damage is a split second away. The very young and the elderly are the most susceptible to burns and scalds. Prevention is the only alternative.

Most scalds result from spills. A pot of oil may be pulled down from the stove. A baby could reach up and knock a cup of tea or coffee out of mom's hand and onto himself. A toddler may use a tablecloth to hoist up and shift a hot bowl of soup down over himself. A dangling cord from a hot water filled appliance could be yanked. All burns hurt, some kill.

"The extra support from her walker allowed my seven month old to stand and reach the edge of the table. She grabbed the teapot and showered herself with scalding tea." — Mother of Burn Victim

HOT TIPS

- Turn all pot handles in toward the stove.
- Don't hold a baby and drink hot liquids at the same time.
- Serve from the table rather than stove.
- Use placemats instead of tablecloths.
- Switch from delicately balanced tea cups to sturdy mugs.
- Turn the water heater down to 48°C (120°F).
- Test bath water before getting in.
- Do not let a small child pour hot liquids.
- Use guards over radiators or arrange furniture so children cannot touch them.
- Once your child is in the tub, do not add more hot water.
- Do not leave a child alone with a hot-mist vaporizer. Choose a cool-mist model for a child's room.
- Do not let infants bask in direct sunlight and always coat young children's skin with sun screen.

NOTE: If you use a microwave to heat baby food, stir and test before serving. The food tends to heat unevenly. Only use microwave-safe bottles. Do not allow the bottle to go straight from the microwave to the mouth. The milk may be 'superheated' which means the liquid is heated beyond vaporization and, although it shows no signs of boiling, when moved it may erupt violently. A baby who gets a fast swig of superheated milk will get severe burns to the mouth.

"I felt the bathwater with my hand and it seemed alright. Once I climbed in, I realized that it was far too hot, but my feet went numb. I tried to get out but fell in the water instead." -
Burn Victim

The elderly are also frequent scald victims. Poor circulation, hands that have become desensitized by a lifetime of dipping into hot water, medication, are all reasons why an older person may become a victim of a scald.

Many home water heaters are set between 140°F and 160°F. Set your water heater on 'low' or 120°F (48°C). Not only may you save yourself or family from a bad burn, but you'll save on your heating bill as well.

Flammable Sleepwear

As of October 1987, it is impossible to buy a pure cotton, flowing nightdress for a child from a retail outlet. Nightwear is no more dangerous than daywear, but the flowing material may brush against a stovetop, fireplace or portable heater. More to the point, one-half of all the children who were injured or died after their clothes caught on fire were wearing pajamas at the time.

There is no fabric that will not burn with flame contact, however, some material will stop burning faster than others when the ignition source is removed. Cotton, rayon, linen, acrylic and acetate, for example, are easy to flare and hard to douse. Nylon, polyester and spandex melt and burn slowly, although they have a tendency to stop burning once flame contact is removed. Wool and silk do not easily light up and tend to self-extinguish. Modacrylics (such as Verel and Dynel), Cordelan and Saran will extinguish as soon as the flame is removed.

Basically, lightweight fabrics usually burn faster than heavyweight material, while loose, open weaves are more of a problem than tightly woven fabrics. Flames tend to streak across flannelet, corduroy or any material with a 'bumpy' surface.

Flowing, frilly outfits with billowing sleeves and flouncy ruffles can be very dangerous. Hostess gowns or sheer nighties may also go up in a flash. In some cases, flames could engulf a person in less than 30 seconds. Curiosity causes most fire-related accidents with the young, but adults tend to catch on fire when cooking, smoking or handling flammable materials while dressed in floppy clothes.

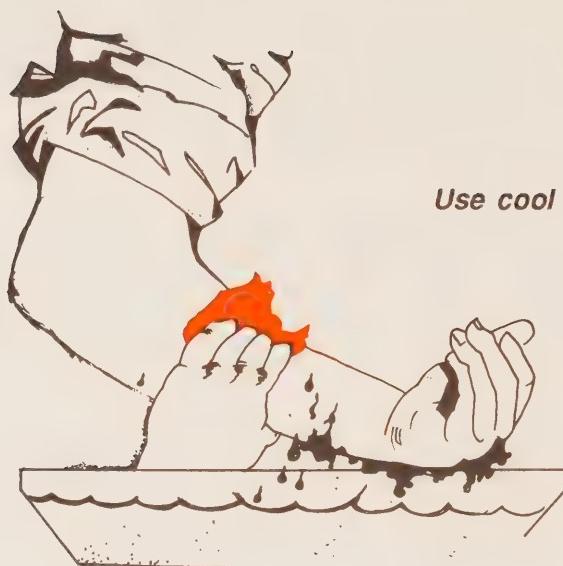
HOT TIPS

- Buy cotton or rayon outfits in snug fitting designs.
- Switch from nightgowns to polo pajamas or sleepers.
- Choose dressing gowns with tight fitting sleeves.
- Flame-resistance may be affected by washing. Check the label. (To maintain fire resistance, wash baby clothes in detergent, not soap.)

Note: That little nightie at the bazaar might be hard to resist, but what is it made of? Unless you know, pass on it.

IF A SCALD INJURY DOES HAPPEN:

- Remove victim from heat.
- Pour cool (not cold) water over the injured area for five minutes. (If an infant is involved, pour cool water over burned area for one minute or wrap infant in wet sheet and get medical help.)
- Remove clothing, belts and jewelry from victim.
- If there are bits of clothing stuck to the area, leave them there.
- Do not apply creams, butter or lotions to the burn area.
- In the case of second or third degree burns, or if a first degree burn covers a large area, keep the victim warm. Wrap in clean sheet. Be prepared to treat for shock. Get medical help.



Burns are grouped into four major categories:

- 1) **Thermal** burns result from direct flame or hot object contact. Scalds from steam or boiling water are also included. Depending on how large the area, the burn can be minimal to life threatening.

Treatment: Localized burns should be immersed in cool (not cold) water. Remove rings, bangles and other bobbles before the onset of swelling. If a large area is affected, take victim to hospital. Do not pick clothing from the wounds. Nor should you cover the burn with a homemade remedy. If necessary, gently drape a clean cotton bandage over the burn.

- 2) **Corrosive** burns from chemicals can be life threatening especially if taken internally.

Treatment: Chemicals on the skin will continue to burn as long as contact remains. Flush chemical away with water. Take victim to hospital. If corrosive material has been ingested, call the poison control. Do not induce vomiting without specific directions.

- 3) **Electrical** burns are the result of being zapped with a live electrical charge. Burns are likely to result at point of entry and exit. Electric shock, which often accompanies such a burn, may be life threatening.

Treatment: Check for breathing and circulation. A victim may look fine but prepare to give cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Keep warm, not hot, and transport to hospital.

- 4) **Radiation** burns, particularly from the sun, x-ray radiation, or that which emanates from radioactive material, is seldom immediately life threatening (with the exception of sun stroke), however, the long term effects are a major concern.

Treatment: Infants should not be left in direct sunlight. Sunscreen is not recommended for babies under one year. Should an infant acquire a sunburn, obtain a medical opinion. Sun stroke victims require medical help.

HOT TIPS

- Unconscious people should not be given any fluid by mouth.
- To prevent the spread of infection, do not touch blisters or the burn area.
- Do not apply any unprescribed lotions or cover the burn with a fabric which may stick to the wound (clean cotton sheets are good emergency dressing).
- When in doubt, call the emergency line at your local hospital. If the victim is very young or very old, always consult a doctor.

Do you get them mixed up too?

A first degree burn is the least severe and effects only the outer skin. While the affected area will be red, sore and a little bit swollen, there will be no blistering.

A second degree burn, generally speaking, is the most painful burn. Several layers of the skin are affected. There is blistering and swelling. The skin will be moist.

The third degree burn is the most serious since all layers of the skin are affected. The area will be charred or white. There will be little pain since the nerve endings will have been destroyed.

"I didn't know what to do. I had never lived in an apartment building. The alarm was blaring, people were rushing about and the baby was crying louder than I thought was possible. It never occurred to me to talk to the baby's parents about what to do in case of fire. I was so frightened. I just sat on the sofa and rocked the baby. We were lucky." — Babysitter

JUST FOR BABYSITTERS

Does your babysitter know what to do in case of fire? Talk about it.

Rules for Babysitters

- Know the home you are in. Where are the exits? Are there smoke alarms? (Perchance one goes off, do you know how to escape?) Where are the thermostats and/or air conditioning controls? Is a working flashlight handy?



Would you hire a babysitter who drinks and smokes? Chances are you would not. But do YOU smoke and drink to excess while the kids are in the home? Remember, one-third of fire deaths are caused by careless smoking and one-third of adult fire victims are impaired. You may otherwise be a great parent, but when you are drinking, no one is looking after the children.

- All emergency numbers (fire, poison control, taxi, ambulance, doctor, hospital, trusted neighbors) should be posted by the telephone. An important address to record in the same place is THE ADDRESS OF THE HOME YOU ARE IN. The cross-street and, if applicable, directions to the house should be written down.
- Do you know the household fire escape plan? Remember, your first and only important responsibility in a fire is to get your charges and self out of the home. Once out, stay out. Call the fire department from a neighbour's home.

FARM FIRES

In the city or suburbs, surrounded by fire stations, a fire is serious stuff. But on a farm, particularly one that is remote or not serviced by hydrants, a fire can devastate.

Prevention is the first, best and, sometimes, the only line of defence. If your area lacks a fire department, or your volunteer fire department needs more support and co-operation, band with your neighbours and decide on the best tactics for mutual help.

HOT TIPS

- Never permit smoking in or around the barns.
- Construct a farm pond in accordance with the Ontario Ministry of Food and Agriculture.
- Keep fire extinguishers mounted at the main entrances of all barns, near power equipment, fuel stores and on the tractor.
- Never refuel a hot internal combustion engine.
- Keep the barn litter free and watch out for hot spots such as manure piles and oily rags.
- Store petroleum and chemicals with care. Log the types and quantities. Should a fire break out, the details MUST be given to the firefighters.
- Install lightning rods in accordance with the *Lightning Rods Act*.
- Burn garbage in an incinerator equipped with a spark arrestor.
- Do not burn in the field or in a wind.
- Faulty electrical wiring in the barn is a real problem. All electrical wiring must be inspected by a hydro authority.
- Post emergency signs by every telephone.
- Teach your children well.

"The fire started in the barn. We are on a party line so it wasn't long before all our neighbors rallied around. Unfortunately, the fire was in the dead of night and all the cars blocked the incoming fire trucks. Confusion and good intentions resulted in the loss of our main barn and shed." — Fire Victim

The literature on farm fire prevention is extensive and exacting. Pinpoint your concerns and problems and request general and specific information from the addresses below. A life's work should never go up in smoke.

Info at your fingertips:

*Office of the Fire Marshal
7 Overlea Boulevard
Toronto, Ontario M4H 1A8*

(416) 963-1982

*Farm Safety Association
Suite 22, 340 Woodlawn Road West
Guelph, Ontario N1H 7K6*

(519) 823-5600

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. A matchbook.
2. An explosion.
3. Third.
4. Second.
5. ABC (multi-purpose).
6. 33% (1/3).
7. Cotton.
8. Soap.
9. A match.
10. Moisture of the eyes, nose and throat.
11. Careless smoking.
12. A tar-like gummy substance that is carried by smoke. It builds up in chimneys and may catch on fire.
13. Smoke alarm.
14. Small kitchen, bathroom, near air vents, ceiling fans or air conditioning units, furnace exhaust, on insulated exterior walls.
15. Get out or stay put.
16. To different degrees, all children are fascinated by fire.
17. 33% (1/3).
18. Make a smoke tent by holding the top of a sheet or blanket over your head. Lean out the window. The material must dangle behind and rest on the floor.
19. Scalds.
20. Your own address, which is especially helpful to visitors or babysitters who might have to make an emergency call.
21. Lint trap and vent pipes not kept clean.
22. Protect your hand, cover pan with a pot lid, turn off the stove and leave it for a minimum of five minutes. Or, use an extinguisher with a rating that contains the letter 'B'. Contact your fire department.
23.
 - Read about arson and take it seriously.
 - Report suspicious incidents.
 - Keep your yard clear of combustible debris.
 - Protect your home with smoke alarms.
 - Insist on a fire awareness program at your local school.
 - Teach your children well.
24. Exit signs.
25.
 - Canadian Standards Association
 - Underwriters Laboratories Canada
 - Canadian Gas Association
 - Warnock Hersey
 - flammable
 - explosive
 - corrosive

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HOT TIPS

- **INSTALL SMOKE ALARMS**
- **TEST & MAINTAIN SMOKE ALARMS**
- **HAVE A MULTI-PURPOSE (ABC) FIRE EXTINGUISHER ON HAND**
- **PLAN YOUR ESCAPE**
- **KEEP A COPY OF ALL EMERGENCY NUMBERS BY THE TELEPHONE**



Ministry of
the Solicitor
General